

REMARKS

The Office Action of July 25, 2007, has been carefully considered.

Claim 25 has been rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, as depending from a canceled claim, and this has now been corrected. Withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

Claims 15-19, 24 and 25 have been rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as anticipated by Osborn.

Claim 15-16 have now been canceled and replaced by a new Claim 26; Claims 27 through 30 have also been added to the application.

New Claim 26 recites the invention in substantial detail, including a tubular housing passing through the wall of the treatment tank, and extending from an upstream end external to the tank and attached to the wall of the tank, to a downstream end within the tank to which an injection nozzle is attached for the injection of gas therein through an end hole, the upstream end comprising a closure generally opposite to the injection nozzle and means for connection to a source of gas. A rod is disposed within the tubular housing and slidable therein, the rod having a diameter which decreases in steps from an upstream end disposed within the upstream end of the tubular housing to a downstream end disposed adjacent the nozzle. The upstream end of the rod has an outer diameter sufficiently close to an inner diameter of the upstream end of the tubular housing to provide a leak tight seal therebetween; the downstream end of the rod has a diameter dimensioned for unblocking the end hole. Control means are provided for linearly moving the rod in the tubular housing in a back and forth manner, comprising a rod extension from the upstream end through the closure by a predetermined length, and terminating in a control device. The rod is linearly movable by the predetermined length from a first position in which the

downstream end of the rod is adjacent, but set back from the end hole, to a second position in which the rod unblocks the end hole with the upstream end of the rod and the tubular housing maintaining leak tightness throughout the back and forth movement. The control device may be a handle means or an automated device, as disclosed in the specification in paragraph [0036] and [0037] of the application as published.

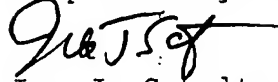
It is noted that in Osborn, the rod and the cleaning head 22 are of constant or increasing diameter, requiring that the rod be pulled back into the tubular housing to permit the flow of gas therethrough. According to the invention, the rod is of decreasing diameter, permitting gas to be injected into the tank, with the rod essentially in place. Movement over only a short distance is necessary in order to clear the injection nozzle. Moreover, the rod of Osborn requires a packing for a tight seal. According to the invention, the rod has a diameter which is sufficiently close to the inner diameter of the upstream of the tubular housing to provide a leak tight seal in itself. No packing material is necessary. As it has thus been shown that the invention as claimed is a clear improvement over Osborn, withdrawal of this rejection is requested.

Claims 20-23 have been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) over Osborn in view of Hartmann. Hartmann has been cited to show an injection device including a "pricker bar" which meets the limitation of a mobile means for unblocking the end hole of the nozzle, and cleaning guidance means. The Hartmann reference, however, does not cure the defects of Osborn and withdrawal of this rejection is requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants submit that the present application is now in condition for allowance. An early allowance of the application with amended claims is earnestly solicited.

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Respectfully submitted,



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